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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## REPORT

Next Review Date: 2008

# INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Rumania

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SUBJECT The Turda Ocna-Muresului  
Chemical Plants

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1. The Solvay Works, formerly the property of the Solvay Company of Brussels, comprise two plants:
  - a. The Turda Plant, erected shortly before World War I, a chlorine-alkali electrolysis works.
  - b. The Ocna-Muresului (Vioara) Plant, a soda-works manufacturing according to the Solvay process.

Both works are connected to a natural gas line which the Solvay Works had constructed and which, after the expiration of the contract with the Rumanian State, Solvay handed over to Sonamet, the nationalized natural gas company. The gas flows from the field north of Medias in Transylvania.

2. The Turda Plant is located on the Aries River, at the south entrance of the town of Turda, in the vicinity of the Turda railroad station. The main highway Sibiu-Cluj passes close to the plant. The plant manufactures caustic soda in solid form, chlorine and a few by-products. It has a chlorine dilution installation. A part of the chlorine is used in the manufacture of chloride lime and hydrochloric acid. The electrolysis operates according to the patented processes of the Solvay Company. Prior to World War II, the plant capacity per year was approximately:

Caustic soda	20,000 tons
Bicarbonate	100 tons
Chloride of lime	4,000 tons
Hydrochloride acid	2,500 tons
Water-glass	10,000 tons
Liquid chlorine	200 tons

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During the late war the installations were destroyed and did not operate for a long time. After the war they came first under the administration of Casbi, the custodian of enemy property, but since the Solvay Company is Belgian, the works had to be returned to it. Solvay began immediate reconditioning, but was obstructed prior to completion by the nationalization decree of 11 June 1948. The necessary machines and replacement parts were then already in Rumania so that the new state administration, with the help of some engineers who remained, succeeded in returning the plant to operation. The Turda Plant at present produces almost at former capacity. The surpluses

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of caustic soda not used in Rumania itself are exported to the Soviet Union and Bulgaria. The Zărnești Cellulose Factory is the chief customer for liquid chlorine. The installation for hydrochloride acid, at the time of this report, was being exploited at only one-third capacity.

3. The Ocna Mureșului Plant is newer and larger than the Turda Works. It is located on the Mures River, on the outskirts of Ocna Mureșului, some 22 kilometers southeast of Turda and five kilometers east of the automobile highway. This plant operates according to the ammonia-soda process of the Solvay Company and manufactures carbonate of soda and caustic soda. This plant also suffered from the war but could be repaired with the replacement parts available in the country, so that already in the summer of 1948 the old production figures were attained. The basic capacity approaches 50,000 tons of ammonia-soda per year. Caustic soda is produced only when the production of the Turda Plant is not sufficient. The ownership relationship parallels that of the Turda Plant as described above.
4. The Turda and Ocna Mureșului Plants, which together employ 1,000 workers, belong to the key chemical industries of Rumania. Both works would probably already have been incorporated into the Soviet-Rumanian industrial combination had it not been for the dispute with the Belgian owners. Bargaining is still in progress concerning the compensation which Rumania is to pay the Solvay Company in Brussels.

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